Halifax Housing Authority Annual Report

1989

A year of challenges met

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I present this 1989 Annual Report, on behalf of the Board of Directors.

Through 1989 a number of challenges faced the Authority: three of these are significant. We were challenged (1) to achieve greater tenant involvement in community life; (2) to maintain and improve the physical housing stock and (3) to provide more effective use of resources. The first challenge has been addressed on a number of fronts. Tenants are now more active in various tenant associations. This renewed tenant interest has resulted in valuable social, recreation, literacy, drug awareness, tutoring and job creation programs.

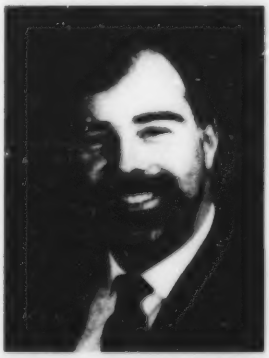
The challenge of improving physical resources has been an ongoing concern. While substantial improvements have been made, financial constraints still inhibit a thorough and complete upgrading. The Authority is very proud of the Uniacke Square Regeneration project and is indebted to the tenants for their patience and support. Mulgrave Park has also received considerable study and attention with one million dollars spent on renovations. A comprehensive plan developed for the area will provide a modernization and upgrading framework for the 1990's.

The third major challenge addressed by the Authority was the reorganization of resources to more adequately meet the needs of the tenants and provide more effective operation. A major planning process initiated in 1988 set the stage for decentralized services. Improved communications between tenants, staff and the Board has resulted.

While the Authority has reason to be proud of the progress made in 1989, it cannot become complacent. There is still much to be done. I am confident that future challenges will be vigorously pursued as the Board, tenants, staff and partners strive to develop a sense of community and create housing that everyone can be proud of.

John Yauss
Chairman

New policies are at the heart of the new mission statement



Nineteen eighty nine can be characterized as a year of dynamic change. Many challenges have been addressed and many are actively being pursued.

In last year's annual report, I commented on our increased responsibility and renewed commitment to serve our tenants. This year's report highlights this commitment and the results achieved.

As the Chairman states in his message, the Housing Authority cannot afford to become complacent. We are going to continue to foster and strengthen our ties with our tenants with the goal of establishing formal joint tenant/management committees. As communication leads to understanding, we have plans to establish a newsletter, to permit an exchange of information between the Housing Authority and tenants, but equally important, between tenants. With the Board approving a new Mission Statement, we will have to review, develop and implement policies which are consistent with our newly established goals. And, of course, we will continue to strive for ways to improve the quality and service to the tenants while pursuing our modernization retro-fit programs throughout the portfolio.

Michael H. Spencer
General Manager

Board of Directors

Mr. John Yauss*	Chairman - Executive Director Recreation Council on Disability
Dr. Margaret Ellison**	Professor, Mount Saint Vincent University
Ms. Sharon Fogo*	Architect, Anwyll Fogo
Mr. David Black	Black & Associates Accounting Services Ltd.
Mrs. Linda Carvery	Homemaker
Mr. John Cooper, Q.C.	Lawyer, Crowe, Dillon, Robinson
Mr. James Dickie	Senior Account Mgr, HongKong Bank of Canada
Mr. William Hayter	Vice President, Gem Construction Specialist
Mr. James MacLean	Lawyer, Block & MacLean

* Retired December 31, 1989
**Incoming Chairman

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A new focus for a new decade - the Halifax Housing Authority prepares for the 1990's.

Responding to an ever changing social and developmental environment, the Halifax Housing Authority is poised at the advent of a new decade well prepared to carry forward major initiatives in the areas of resource management, physical environments and social development.

This readiness has not come about by accident. On January 1, 1989, the Halifax Housing Authority (HHA) implemented a new organizational structure, which, in tandem with a new mission statement, will enable the Authority to administer its properties and programs more efficiently and with more attention on tenants' well-being. Long before the implementation date, the Board and staff at the Authority were engaged on a voyage of internal discovery and realignment. Through this process new directions emerged, were tested and were found to be valid and workable.

The new mission statement, which reads: "To advocate for and manage housing related resources that will provide quality physical environments and social development", is a significant departure from the statement of a year previous, which was: "To manage housing that meets the physical and social needs of persons as determined by current housing policy."

The Halifax Housing Authority is committed to the wise administration of its resources and realizes how intertwined that administration is with the developmental needs of the people using the Authority's resources.

Along with the recognition of the reality of people's needs must come the acknowledgement of what is already in progress. Just as reorganization was and is a priority within the Authority, self fulfilment and self-help have become successful themes within existing and newly-formed tenants associations and their committees.

Tenants Associations and Action Committees - Co-operation and Trust

Throughout the buildings and properties administered by the H.H.A., which have been grouped into roughly four equal sections (Halifax North, Halifax Centre, Halifax West and Mainland South), people of varied backgrounds, cultures and social orientation have linked hands in creative ways to help themselves and to help one another.

Halifax North
Mulgrave Park

Mulgrave park is such a place. Founded very recently, the Resource Centre of Concerned Residents Committee there has a mandate to provide a voice of advocacy for the interests of their community, to organize and sponsor events which enrich the lives of members and to encourage services to community members. During 1989 representatives of the Committee spoke at community meetings and held regular discussions between Halifax Housing Authority staff, the Halifax Police Department and with others. At the same time, efforts were made to become actively involved in enhancing the community's image at large and with ways in which the budgeting process could be affected to better represent specific needs. The Committee also sponsored adult and youth dances, after-school tutoring, a program of bookmobile visits and the Annual End of Summer Barbecue.

Joseph Howe Manor(seniors)

As part of the senior citizens component of the Halifax North project, Joseph Howe Manor, a south-end seniors building, has always been the home of active initiatives by the seniors. The calendar of social events includes a Valentines and St. Patrick's day dance and dinner, musical socials every Saturday evening, bingos, outings and longer trips each summer plus regular Tuesday evening card games.

Halifax Centre
Gordon B. Isnor Manor(seniors)

At Gordon B. Isnor Manor, the seniors population there have organized a Tenants Association and a Residents' Committee which has obtained an 18-month New Horizons Grant to cover the salary of a part-time co-ordinator. Activities at the manor include a weekly luncheon, a foot-care clinic, a bi-weekly hair dressing service, bingo and a movie evening offering an inter-generational experience for participants.

Seniors at G. B. Isnor Manor enjoy a weekly hot luncheon under the auspices of the New Horizons Program

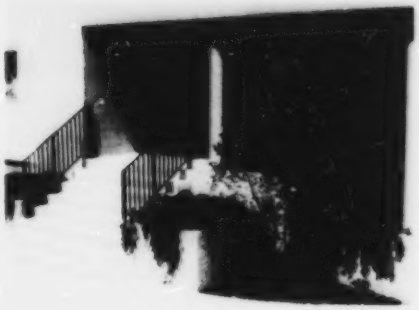
Halifax West(seniors)

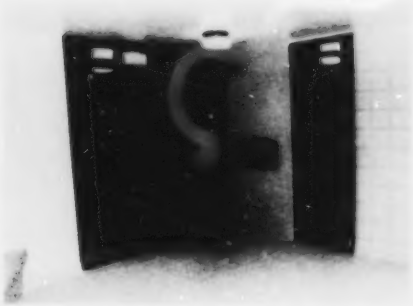
The five senior citizens buildings managed by the Halifax West office have active tenants associations. Throughout the buildings these associations sponsor such activities as bingo, card games, darts and special occasion dinners. Some of the associations offer bus tours which cover Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, or anywhere else the residents wish to travel, as well as an annual viewing of the Christmas lights in the city and a Christmas dinner. Special activities often include musicians, choirs and gospel singers and many of the buildings in Halifax West offer church services of various denominations. A good flow of communication exists between the H.H.A. and the seniors associations through on-going meetings and other forms of interaction.

Halifax West(family)

In the realm of family housing, the Halifax West project of Bayers Road/Westwood has a new Community Action Committee which is committed to improving the quality of life for residents there. Among the programs initiated by the Committee are a Neighbourhood Watch program and child care needs assessment, which led to the hiring of a social development worker through the City of Halifax. The real child care needs of the community will be explored with the help of this new person, as well as the process of obtaining funding for identified needs.

Children enjoy a hot lunch at Rockingstone Heights School.





A recent facelift to the entrance and lobby of Bonaventure Towers was well-received by tenants.

One of the main concerns of the Bayers Westwood Community Action Committee is drug abuse and how to combat this threat. Members of the executive have met several times with representatives from Concerned Citizens Against Drugs and have made presentations outlining their concerns to the Mayor's Task Force on Drugs. At the same time, a "Smooth Sailing" program was presented in cooperation with the Nova Scotia Commission on Drug Dependency.

The Community Action Committee believes that positive social change can be brought about through working with other groups with similar concerns. To this end, representatives from the Anti-Poverty Network and the Low Income Networking Committee have been invited to meet with the membership to share information and to discuss issues.

The Bayers Westwood Community Action Committee has established an excellent working relationship with the Halifax Housing Authority and hopes are high that this mutual support will lead to even more programs and services of benefit to the community.

Mainland South
Greystone

In Spryfield, the Greystone Tenants Association, apart from holding regular exercise classes, organizing a darts league and sponsoring interdenominational Sunday School classes and teen dances, is very active in the role of advocate on behalf of tenants. A working committee has been established, comprised of Authority staff and members of the Association. On other fronts, the Association, through active networking, provides resource people who speak to the tenants on subjects such as legal aid, women's employment outreach programs, security and library services and projects.

Reorganization and appreciation

On January 1,1989, the Halifax Housing Authority implemented a new organizational structure. The goal of this new structure is improvement of the quality and level of services provided through decentralization and strengthening of accountability. Strengthening this goal are improvments in communication throughout the organization, thus allowing the Housing Authority to be more responsive to the physical and social needs of the tenants.

The most significant change related to the reorganization has been the creation of the Operations Department which is responsible for the day to day management of properties, and assisting tenants with their challenges. The housing portfolio has been divided into roughly four equal sections, (Halifax North, Halifax Centre, Halifax West and Mainland South) each headed by a Property Manager. The Property Manager in each area supervises a team comprised of a Maintenance Supervisor, Clerk, Community Relations Worker, Maintenance, Grounds and Janitorial persons.

Other significant changes saw the Community Relations Department renamed the Tenant Services Department to reflect the departments broadened responsibilities. Tenant Services has assumed the task for receiving and processing applications and the filling of vacant accommodation. The department has also taken on responsibility for managing the Rent Supplement Program and the Recreation Program. In addition, the department is responsible for the on-going evaluation of the tenants' needs, the investigation of resources and designing programs to meet those needs.

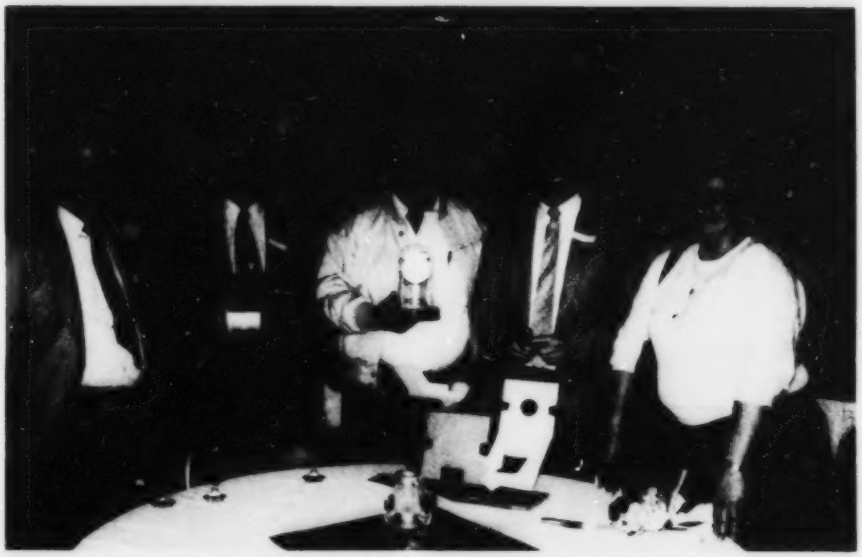
Other changes resulted in the Maintenance Department assuming responsibility for the on-going evaluation, planning, and upgrading of our housing stock. This facet of our organization has taken on increased importance as it is apparent that we are managing an increasingly aging portfolio. Fully one third of our family housing is in excess of thirty years of age and most of it is over twenty years of age. As the buildings get older, it becomes increasingly important that we allocate our funds to the areas where they are needed the most to protect our valuable physical assets.

Having a year under our belts with the new organization has shown that we now provide an efficient and increased level of service to the tenants and at the same time we are able to provide a planning mechanism to upgrade facilities and services.

Dedication, Commitment and Service

The success of the Authority in accomplishing its mission depends on the dedication, commitment and service of all employees. the Board recognized individuals for their contribution to the Authority at an Employee Appreciation Night held in the first quarter of the year. Nominations for the awards are submitted by employees and of these, thirty-four were selected and presented with awards in the following categories:

Voluntary service
Perfect attendance
Personal Improvement
Congeniality
Contribution to the Community & the Authority



Presentations on Employee Appreciation Night: Left to right; Mr. S. A. Pelton, Mr. Joe Redmond (20 year certificate); Mr. Guy Hensbee (25 year service award); Mr. Michael H. Spencer and Ms. Debbie Mosher.

Recreation-a climate of fun and growth

Because of the close and cooperative working relationship between the Authority, tenants' associations and committees and the community at large, the evolution of a broader and more people oriented way of administering was and is inevitable. In this spirit of positive development the H.H.A. continues to provide quality recreation programs for the children of tenants living in three large public family housing projects. These are Bayers Road/Westwood Park, Greystone and Mulgrave Park.

For administrative purposes, the year is divided into three sessions: January to May, July and August, and October to December. This division allows for changes in programs, staff recruitment, and training.

In all areas, the focus for summer programs was the introduction to Halifax City and the surrounding area from an historical perspective. The children had exposure to several places not normally accessible to them. The Recreation Department is proud of its programs, many of which emphasise practical values: significant of these are instructional camps and basic arts and crafts. All areas held opening and closing barbecues, Christmas parties and children were offered the opportunity to ski at Martock.

Organized games help instil basic, practical values of cooperation and fair play.

Programs at Bayers Road/ Westwood are held at two locations: St. Andrew's School and St. Catherine's School. During the school year programs are offered five evenings a week at both locations, and two hours a day on Saturdays and Sundays at St. Andrew's. In the summer months programs include daytime events and outings from Monday to Friday. The Bayers Road/ Westwood area program has a very active and competitive softball program.

The Greystone program operates from Rockingstone Heights School. During the school year, programs in Greystone take place from Monday to Friday for children five years and over.

Greystone Recreation has the largest attendance of all the programs. Variety in programming, location and isolation from other recreation programs are some of the reasons that the program is so popular.

The recreation program at Mulgrave Park was the most recent to come on stream. Limited on-site facilities there restrict this program at the present time. Several meetings were held during 1989 to try to marry H.H.A. programming into some of the local community

Recreation programs benefit various age groups all year 'round.

facilities. Inroads were made and future plans in this direction appear positive.

All areas benefited from better playground equipment. The upgrading of the surrounding areas created an improved rapport and community feeling with the tenants. Plans for further enhancement will continue to improve the quality of life for the tenants.

A comprehensive staff training component was designed in 1989. This will continue in 1990 with the goals of improved programming, increased staff knowledge and the continued satisfaction and enjoyment of children participating.

The Annual End of Summer Barbecue in Mulgrave Park is a hot-weather hit with residents of all ages. Food, music and games form the basis for this perennial event, sponsored by the Resource Centre of Concerned Residents Committee.

As the uniforms proclaim, Greystone Minor Softball is "A Hit".

Balloon blowing youngsters take a break to smile at the cameraman at the Mulgrave Annual End of Summer Barbecue.

HALIFAX HOUSING AUTHORITY

BALANCE SHEET
DECEMBER 1989

ASSETS	December 31,1988	December 31,1989
Current Assets		
Cash	8,802	6,998
Accounts Receivable	45,496	107,828
Due from Tenants' Deposit Fund	9,028	11,257
Inventories	74,685	100,111
Prepaid Expenses	36,460	
	174,471	226,194
Tenants' Deposits	106,591	106,367
TOTAL ASSETS	281,062	332,561
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Checks Issued in Excess of Funds on Deposit	60,999	377,928
Rent Received in Advance	241,182	216,005
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	498,185	1,017,429
	800,366	1,611,362
Tenants' Refundable Deposits	106,591	106,367
Partnership Accounts		
Capital (deficits)		
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	(2,485,692)	(3,415,641)
Province of Nova Scotia	2,415,851	2,746,886
City of Halifax	(556,054)	(716,413)
	(625,895)	(1,385,168)
TOTAL LIABILITIES & DEFICIT	281,062	332,561

Note: The Halifax Housing Authority does not own the properties but manages them on behalf of its major contributor, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

HALIFAX HOUSING AUTHORITY

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,1989.

	Actual 1988	Budget 1989	Actual 1989
REVENUE			
Rent	5,636,079	5,839,300	5,730,156
Electricity	119,121	124,320	119,520
Sundry	94,934	95,650	140,638
	5,850,134	6,059,270	5,990,314
Less Bad Debts	30,827	27,000	62,983
	5,819,307	6,032,270	5,927,331
EXPENDITURES			
Administrative	1,242,936	1,228,000	1,311,317
Utilities	1,637,792	1,766,000	1,693,561
Other Operating	2,231,639	2,404,826	2,362,982
Maintenance	2,178,436	2,404,399	2,473,811
Modernization and Improvements	750,861	1,921,835	1,991,304
Municipal Taxes	988,683	1,051,700	1,065,912
Amortization of Partnership Investments	5,022,874	5,053,048	5,227,920
	14,053,221	15,829,808	16,127,007
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUE*	8,233,914	9,797,538	10,199,676

* Since rents paid by our tenants are not expected to cover operating costs, the resulting loss must be subsidized. The net operating loss is shared by the three levels of government; 75% by CMHC, 12.5% by the Province of Nova Scotia, and 12.5% by the City of Halifax.

Modernizations and Improvements in 1989

Mulgrave Park

In 1988 a steering committee from the Halifax Housing Authority and the Nova Scotia Department of Housing, carried out a tenants' survey and made several recommendations. Certain of these reflected concerns for the tenants' safety as well as other suggestions for improving Mulgrave Park. Just as in the Uniacke Square regeneration, implementation of these recommendations will enhance the attractiveness and efficiency of the tenants' residences and improve building security.

During 1989 over one million dollars worth of renovations took place in Mulgrave Park. New dead bolt locks were installed on all the unit doors. Aquitania and Bonaventure Towers now have security entrance systems and doors as well as receiving new roofs and upgraded ventilation systems. A new front lobby was installed in Bonaventure Tower. New pitched roofs were retro-fitted on twelve buildings and the exterior painting program continued to include five more buildings.

Uniacke Square

In July of 1987 the Uniacke Square regeneration was officially announced. Joint funding for $8 million from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Province of Nova Scotia, was allocated.

A steering committee of community members, CMHC, the Halifax Housing Authority and other interested parties was formed to monitor the progress of the project. This committee also studies the impact of the changes on the existing community and the surrounding neighbourhood.

The obvious differences are in the dramatic changes to the exterior of the buildings. Porches and canopies add personality to each unit and upgraded doors and windows make the units more attractive. Changes to landscaping and recreational areas are upgrading the image of the project in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Inside the units, modernization has included completely renovated kitchens. Counter space has been nearly doubled and the overall functionality of the space enhanced. Along with new fixtures, bathrooms will have new tubs, showers and vanities.

Some bachelor and four bedroom units have been converted to one and two bedroom units to meet the increasing demand for housing for smaller families.

With three quarters of the regeneration plan complete, Uniacke Square continues to be upgraded with very positive results with almost all of the families having been rehoused.

Westmoor Lodge/Westwood Towers

Westmoor Lodge went through a major roof reconstruction. Westwood Towers had all the windows replaced and new ventilation fans were installed to improve air circulation.

Bayers Road

Eleven single family homes along Bayers Road continued to be upgraded with new vinyl siding, gutters, downspouts and windows.

Greystone

The window replacement program at Greystone Road continued this year with 64 units receiving new windows.

Cornwallis Morreau Lodge & Cowie Hill Lodge

A new wooden patio was constructed at Cornwallis Morreau Lodge and a major slope behind Cowie Hill Lodge was reconstructed and landscaped.

Community pride and improved security are just some of the benefits to tenants of Uniacke Square.

Mission and Goals - tools for future use

Mission Statement

To advocate for and manage housing related resources that will provide quality physical environments and social development.

Goals

Administration	To plan, manage and evaluate the resources.
Finance	To budget for and monitor the financial resources of the Authority.
Operations	To provide consistent, effective administration for the safety, security and well being of the tenants.
Tenant Services	To match physical resources with applicant and tenant needs and determine effective program development.
Personnel	To select, develop, train and administer human resources.
Maintenance	To maintain the integrity of the physical assets.
Public Relations	To develop and maintain a positive public image internally and externally.